



# Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site

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## Cultural Resources Statement

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### TABLE OF CONTENTS

#### [PREFACE](#)

#### CHAPTER I: [INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION](#)

- A. Establishment and Development Limits
  - 1. General Site Description
- B. Historical Structures
  - 1. Site Evaluation
- C. Terrain
- D. Visitor Services
- E. Historical Summary
- F. Historical and Cultural Themes
  - 1. Historical
  - 2. Architectural
  - 3. Archeological and Anthropological

#### CHAPTER II: [CULTURAL RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION](#)

- A. Significance
- B. Resources
- C. Historical Objects
  - 1. Steam Thresher
  - 2. Hoof Trimmer
  - 3. Self Feeders
  - 4. Feed Troughs
  - 5. Farm Machinery
- D. 1880-1883
  - 1. Fences
  - 2. Irrigation Ditches

3. Underground Water Systems
4. The Historical Scene

## CHAPTER III: [CURRENT AND PROJECTED CULTURAL RESOURCE NEEDS](#)

- A. Furnishings
- B. Structures
- C. Development D. Scenic Easements
- E. Status of Research
  1. National Park Service Research
  2. Other Research

## CHAPTER IV: [PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS](#)

- A. Planning Studies and Reports Needed
- B. Recommendations or Special Considerations
  1. Park Staff
  2. Restoration
  3. Scenic Easements
  4. Interpretation

## [BIBLIOGRAPHY](#)

## [MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT](#)

## [RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL STUDIES](#)

### I. ADDITIONAL STUDIES

- A. Historical Base Map and Ground Cover Study
- B. Biographical Study: Conrad and Augusta Kohrs and John Bielenberg
- C. Furnishings Study
- D. Archeology
- E. Ranch Operations
- F. Historic Resource Maintenance Guide
- G. Historical Data Compilation

### II. INTERPRETATION

### III. MICROFILM READERS

## IV. STAFF

[Introduction](#)

[Historic Resource Study](#) | [Historic Structure Report](#)

---

<http://www.nps.gov/grko/hrs/crsi.htm>

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site

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## Historic Resource Study, Cultural Resources Statement, -and- Historic Structure Report

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### PREFACE

This report is only a beginning. It serves as an introduction to the lengthy and complex history of a large Montana ranch, an institution in whose story is reflected the early settlement of the state and more than a full century of subsequent history: dynamic, prosaic, and multifaceted at one and the same time. A constant aspect of the story is the magnitude of it. The Grant-Kohrs Ranch, the "home ranch" of the immense open range cattle and mining operations of Conrad Kohrs and John Bielenberg, contains a myriad of structures and buildings and a richly furnished ranch house, each worthy of detailed consideration. The documentary collections concerning the Kohrs and Bielenberg Home Ranch are massive and detailed, revealing a range cattle operation that spanned all of Montana and parts of Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and the Canadian province of Alberta. The raising of thoroughbred cattle is also an important part of the Kohrs and Bielenberg home ranch story. One of the partner's business ledgers for the period 1892 to 1901 listed 591 separate accounts, some for amounts over half a million dollars, yet others noting only a few hours pay for a summer ranch hand who helped in haying.

Within the necessary limits of time and funds available to meet the immediate and pressing needs of the park, and the requirement to produce material for use in interpretation, legislative compliance, planning, and exhibits, it is obvious that a lengthy and comprehensive history of the ranch could not be produced at this time. Instead, this report attempts to provide an introduction to the many activities of the ranch, focusing primarily on the broad history of the Kohrs and Bielenberg cattle operation. Necessary additional research is discussed in detail in the [Recommendations](#) section at the end of this study, and many of the appendices will provide guidance to the source materials on the park.

Part of the study -- virtually a project within a project -- was the compilation, organization, and microfilming of the voluminous records owned by Mr. Conrad Kohrs Warren, last owner of the ranch. This work, executed by University of Montana Archivist Dale Johnson and his photographer Gerald Kling, was done under contract to the National Park Service. It is somewhat ironic to note that Mr.



Johnson's excellent work, paid for by funds for this study, could not be utilized, except peripherally, in the preparation of this report. Yet the seven reels of microfilm serve to strengthen this study's reason for being: to provide data for further research and for interpretation of the park. An index of the seven rolls of film is contained as an appendix.

The study is organized in two parts: The first is a [Historic Resource Study](#) (Project 2001-1016-483, Type 32, Package 113), which includes a [Cultural Resources Statement](#); the second is the Historical Data section of the [Historic Structure Report](#) (Project 2001-1033-487, Type 35, Package 113). Naturally, there will be some overlapping of information. Because the two are being produced under one cover, the bulk of the general historical data that appears will be in the Historic Research Study, with material in the Historic Structure Report confined to structural history and allied information. A map of the historical resources, an initial effort subject to change as more historical data become available, but one which can serve as an interim Historic Base Map, is included in the report and relates to both parts of the study.

The Historic Resource Study is organized chronologically. For the 1866 to 1918 period it has as its core an unpublished manuscript, "The Autobiography of Conrad Kohrs," owned by Mr. Conrad Warren. Numerous other materials, most of them either county records or manuscript material from the Kohrs Papers -- also owned by Mr. Warren -- or those at the Montana Historical Society, buttress the material in the Kohrs autobiography. The Historic Structure Report is organized by structure, with appropriate park-wide data preceding the building-by-building studies.

Both reports will center around the home ranch, today's national historic site. Studies of Conrad Kohrs's activities in mining and politics, and detailed studies of the range operations conducted hundreds of miles away from the home ranch, must await future examination.

Many individuals have provided time and effort to help produce this report. Con Warren, of the Warren Ranch in Deer Lodge, has been generous with his knowledge of his grandfather's ranch -- a ranch he first managed and then owned -- and in allowing the use of the manuscript materials that he and his wife, Nell Warren, carefully protected and organized. No doubt many individuals will, in the years to come, recognize the immense debt owed to the Warrens by all those who appreciate the creation of this historical park that commemorates the cattle industry in the American West. It is a special privilege to be among the first in the National Park Service to be able to do so in print. Con and Nell Warren carefully protected the documents and the furnishings of the old ranch, recognizing their national significance long before most others. The result of their vigilance and concern for the integrity of the collection is a historical unit of the National Park Service in which much of the furnishings, structures, lands, and historical documents remain in their original relationships to each other -- a uniquely complete historical park.

The staff at the park have all been most cooperative and helpful. Superintendent Richard Peterson and Administrative Officer Georgia Sumner provided a great deal of help in the many visits to the park required the author. Park Historian Paul Gordon's research assistance, which considerable, is recognized

on the title page. It is a pleasure to thank him again for the valuable data he provided and to state that it was rewarding to work with him and his assistants, Ranger-Historians Larry Martin and Michael Holm. At the Montana Historical Society, Harriet Meloy and her staff, particularly Lory Morrow and Rex Myers, were both efficient and helpful in providing materials and guidance on how best to utilize them. Throughout the project, Historical Architect Peter Snell at the Denver Service Center and I have worked together and his many contributions are most appreciated. Peter's work has been of such broad scope, it is only fitting that he be recognized as an adjunct historian for the project as well as the historical architect. He contributed the bulk of the structural data on the ranch buildings and drew the interim Historical Base Maps. Linda Greene's fine editing hand strengthened the manuscript as it has many others. Her help is gratefully acknowledged. Bill Kelly provided much guidance in the search for funds to microfilm the Kohrs Papers, and Bill Siney guided the contract through the maze for such activities. The assistance of both is appreciated.

The materials at the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library proved to be as valuable as they have been on other projects involving the West, and the staff as helpful. The Milwaukee Road offices at Deer Lodge provided the 1907 map that was a key document and the earliest map showing any ranch structures. The personnel of the Powell County offices in Deer Lodge were all most kind, and the efforts of Bonnie Miller and her staff in the clerk and recorder's office particularly valuable in tracking down the numerous Kohrs and Bielenberg real estate transactions.

George A. Reinhold, of the Rocky Mountain Regional staff, prepared Map 2, and his help was greatly appreciated. Historical Architect Rodd Wheaton of the same office provided the information for Map 2, prepared Appendix 17, and provided guidance and suggestions throughout the project. His assistance proved to be of significant value, and is gratefully acknowledged.

Two friends, Mathew Kane, Jr., and Wayland Smith, Jr., both ranchers in Osage County, Oklahoma, looked over the draft manuscript and provided suggestions for improvement. Many of their comments were incorporated into the study.

While there have been an unusually high number of caveats listed above, each one carefully noting what this study is not, it is necessary to add even one more. It is that this study does not attempt to portray that particular mystique associated with the cattle business that all cattlemen have but few will acknowledge. There is no attempt to explain that drive, emotion, dedication, or whatever it is, that once kept and still keeps cattle growers devoted to a business in which the good years are rare, the bad years common, and the disastrous years not infrequent. That task is avoided in this study, and remains to challenge others.

For the benefit of those whose duties or inclinations will not permit them to read entire chapters, an introduction outlining the events to be described opens each chapter, and a summary synthesizing the material just presented closes each one.

The historian and historical architect worked together on this project from the beginning, within the limits imposed by the two professions, even conducting joint research. Because time and place came



together at the Denver Service Center, this arrangement was possible. Since much of the research was done jointly, the usual repetition of information in the historical and architectural data sections has been avoided in this report. At least that was the intent.

The entire research and writing project for Grant-Kohrs Ranch was looked at as a whole, and in the division of labor much information usually found in the historical and architectural data sections was moved. As a result, the historical resource study contains more than a usual amount of ownership data on the ranch -- the kind of information usually found in structure reports. It also contains a section entitled "Cultural Resources Statement," which includes some data often found in historic structure reports. Because of these deletions, the historical data section of the historic structure report is much briefer than usual. The relative paucity of material here is balanced by a larger amount of historical data in the architectural section.

As of this writing, the preceding appears to be a good solution and to make the overall document much more utilitarian to the interpreters, planners, and researchers who will be using it. Whether or not the unique arrangement will work, however, is not yet known. Like any other experiment, the results will not be final until tested. All data required in the current *Activity Standards* is included. But the data are not always exactly where the *Standards* calls for them to be. If the experiment works then it can be tried with other projects. If it does not, then the attempt can be abandoned.

Despite the considerable assistance noted above, the principal author accepts full responsibility for any errors of fact and interpretation of fact that may appear in this narrative.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Historic Resource Study](#) | [Cultural Resources Statement](#) | [Historic Structure Report](#)  
[Recommendations for Additional Studies](#) | [Bibliography](#)

---

<http://www.nps.gov/grko/hrs/hrsp.htm>

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site

## Historic Structure Report

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL STUDIES AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

#### **I. ADDITIONAL STUDIES**

The initial association with Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site can be somewhat overwhelming. The magnificence of the furnishings in the ranch house, the wealth of ranch artifacts in the barns, and the myriad documents carefully preserved by Con and Nell Warren impress the casual visitor as well as the researcher. This is inevitable, for the site is a rich one, and the demands it puts on those who will interpret and manage it, and on those who must act to physically preserve it, are equally weighty. For these reasons a relatively large number of studies will be required for the ranch in the near and distant future. No doubt they will be costly, but they are demanded by the resource, and are outlined below.

##### **A. Historical Base Map and Ground Cover Study** (Type 33)

The historical base map included in this study is based on research conducted to date, and can serve as a starting point for a more exhaustive and much more complete base map and ground cover study in the future. This report should include an examination of the native grasses, trees, and shrubs and how they have been altered by agricultural uses of the land. Changes in types of vegetation resulting from ranching should form much of this data. The outlines of pastures and attendant fence lines, and the purposes of the various irrigation ditches, diversion dams, and water and drainage systems should be included. The relationship of structures to one another, and to ancillary fences, lands, feedlots, and corrals should be examined in greater detail than has been possible in this report. The types of crops grown during the years the ranch operated, and the types of animals in each of the pastures would be included. This will require considerable research into daily ranch activities and methods. If necessary, archeological excavations might be recommended prior to the completion of this study. The uses of the land by the American Indians prior to its use by John Grant and Con Kohrs should also be included in this study.

##### **B. Biographical Study: Conrad and Augusta Kohrs and John Bielenberg** (No National Park Service standards apply)



This study should be accomplished by a scholar familiar with Montana and Northwestern United States history. Obviously it is beyond the normal scope of the National Park Service's historical research operations, and might have to be executed under contract with a non-Park Service scholar. An understanding of the daily lives and activities of the three people who determined so much of the history of the ranch is vitally needed for accurate interpretation. The study should include general data on all three individuals, and define the place of Conrad Kohrs in Montana politics, real estate, mining, and agriculture. It should begin as soon as possible.

### **C. Furnishings Study** (Type 34)

While the park is blessed with an abundance of original furnishings, a furnishings study is still very much in order. This study should undertake to determine the provenience of the furnishings throughout the ranch. By understanding the styles of furniture, not only is interpretation of the furnishings facilitated, but decisions concerning restoration and interpretative dating are eased. This study should be executed separately from, but in recognition of, any curatorial studies undertaken in regards to furnishings care and routine maintenance.

### **D. Archeology** (Types 31, 42, and 43 as required)

Archeological survey work has been accomplished on a limited basis on two occasions at this park, but it is quite possible that additional work and excavations might be necessary. The drainage system cannot be known in its entirety without limited archeological investigations, and the wisdom of reactivating the drainage systems that once kept the grounds from being as boggy as they are now is an obvious choice facing management at the park. Accordingly, archeology should be considered when formulating procedures for planning, potential development, research, or custodial maintenance of the buildings and site. Formalization of archeological studies, however, must await determinations specific need.

### **E. Ranch Operations** (Type 33)

This study is a most necessary one. The daily operations of the home ranch of Kohrs and Bielenberg should be focused on. Other topics should include: economic aspects of the home ranch in the 19th and 20th centuries, cattle trails to and from the ranch, cattle transportation and marketing and changes in the system over the years, daily ranch and range life, and horse and cattle breeding. Additionally, the daily operations of ranches in the Deer Lodge Valley at the present time should be examined and explained in detail. While the current park staff can benefit from a close association with Con Warren, who lives nearby, future staffs will not have that opportunity. Yet the park will continue to demand from its staff an understanding of ranching skills and stock growing. Without an understanding of why Warren ran things the way he did, and how to care for the animals, equipment, and structures in the daily operations of what might become a "living ranch," future park staffs will be severely handicapped.

While this study should be a history study in format and overall organization, it should contain detailed

ranching instructions when appropriate. This study can best be accomplished by the park staff on a "time-available" basis. Furthermore it need not be cast into narrative form by any set date. The research can be conducted and filed in a useable manner, so that interpretive and operational guides can be written from the data base as required. Likewise, there need not be one single author. The park historian can conduct research and the seasonal staff and maintenance staff can add material in their particular areas of responsibility. The product can be a flexible one, and tuned to the specific needs of Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. But serious consideration should be given to initiating the program as soon as possible, with assistance as needed from the Historic Preservation Division, Denver Service Center, and Professional Services Branch, Rocky Mountain Regional Office.

**F. Historic Resource Maintenance Guide** (No single National Park Service type description applies. Includes Types 32 and 35.)

This study needs to combine the daily maintenance instructions for the park staff expected in a furnishing plan, the preservation data expected in a historic structure preservation guide, and the day-to-day guidance available in a historic resource maintenance plan. The care of furnishings in the house and in the utility buildings should be addressed, as should security procedures, fire prevention and control, building maintenance, painting of structures, road maintenance, and operation of water drainage systems. Like the historic structure preservation guide and historic resource management plans, this guide should be so arranged that it can be added to and updated when necessary. It should be a general guide to the whole of the many-faceted historical resources at the park, however, and view them as a unit. Because of this, it might prove necessary for one individual to control the initial compilation of the data and its preparation into daily guidelines. This individual should be either a curator or a historical architect familiar with the technical demands of building and furnishings conservation.

**G. Historical Data Compilation** (No single National Park Service type description applies.)

With the Kohrs papers on file at the park, including many materials from the Montana Historical Society and all of the papers kept intact over the years by Con Warren, the park staff should begin systematic exploitation of the data contained therein. The creation of files of data available in the papers and photographs will facilitate research in the future and enrich the interpretation program at the park. The microfilmed series of *The New Northwest* available at the Montana Historical Society should also be purchased and added to the park's collections. On a "time available" basis, *The New Northwest* should be examined issue by issue for data concerning the ranch. (This work requires additional equipment, such as microfilm readers.)

## **II. INTERPRETATION**

Consideration might be given at this time to a comprehensive interpretive historical approach to the numerous National Park Service areas in the West concerned either primarily or secondarily with cattle ranching. Grant-Kohrs Ranch represents both the day-to-day ranching business as well as the life-style of the cattle barons. Other such sites include Theodore Roosevelt National Monument, Lyndon Johnson



Birthplace, Dinosaur, and Bighorn Canyon. Taken as a whole, the various sites seem to include virtually every level and every major era of cattle ranching in the American West. A unified theme of interpretation, buttressed by accurate and dispassionate historical research, might be in order.

### **III. MICROFILM READERS**

There is little escaping the fact that this park creates as strong demands for research as at any historical site managed by the National Park Service. It will be a real benefit, then, to prepare research facilities to exploit the rich collections gathered at the park in 1974 and 1975. A microfilm reader (preferably with a printer attached) and a worktable for researchers will repay the monetary investment time and time again and enrich the interpretive program at the park by facilitating the routine research executed by the park staff. Purchase of a microfilm reader should have a high priority at the park, ranking above additional library acquisitions, as necessary as they are.

### **IV. STAFF**

The present park staff does not include a curator, and one is needed as soon as possible. The park collections include art and ceramics, furniture and rugs, guns and leather horse furniture, wagons and sleighs, wallpaper and linoleum, and dishes and silverware. These artifacts are scattered throughout the buildings and exist within vastly different environments. The ranch house is relatively dry, compared to the humidity in Historic Structure 15 where the wagons are kept. The problems are so varied and numerous that only a fully qualified curator, familiar with historic sites, could assess the needs adequately. This is the primary staff need at this time. It is not often that a park comes under the management of the National Park Service in as complete a condition in terms of furnishings, documents, site integrity, and building relationships, and all measures necessary to protect this unusually complete unit should be taken. Indeed, National Park Service policy seems to demand it.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

[Historic Resource Study](#) | [Cultural Resources Statement](#) | [Historic Structure Report](#)

---

<http://www.nps.gov/grko/hrs/hrs8.htm>

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site

## Historic Resource Study

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### [PREFACE](#)

#### CHAPTER I: [THE EARLY YEARS, TO 1866](#)

- A. John Grant Introduces Cattle to the Deer Lodge Valley
- B. Con Kohrs's Early Montana Years

#### CHAPTER II: [KOHR'S AND BIELENBERG, 1867-1885](#)

- A. 1867-1870
- B. 1871-1876
- C. 1877-1880
- D. 1880-1883

#### CHAPTER III: [THE BAD WINTER](#)

#### CHAPTER IV: ["GROWTH"](#)

#### CHAPTER V: ["CONSOLIDATION, THEN DISSOLUTION"](#)

- A. The Ranch in 1907
- B. The Closing Years -- to 1933

#### CHAPTER VI: [THE WARREN ERA](#)

- A. The Ranch in 1937
- B. The Warren Hereford Ranch: 1937 to 1972

## CHAPTER VII: [ASPECTS OF THE HOME RANCH](#)

- A. The Stock
- B. Old Ranching and New
- C. The Family
- D. Vignettes of Daily Life at the Ranch
- E. Conrad Kohrs
- F. John Bielenberg
- G. Augusta Kruse Kohrs

## [BIBLIOGRAPHY](#)

## [MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT](#)

## [RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL STUDIES](#)

### I. ADDITIONAL STUDIES

- A. Historical Base Map and Ground Cover Study
- B. Biographical Study: Conrad and Augusta Kohrs and John Bielenberg
- C. Furnishings Study
- D. Archeology
- E. Ranch Operations
- F. Historic Resource Maintenance Guide
- G. Historical Data Compilation

### II. INTERPRETATION

### III. MICROFILM READERS

### IV. STAFF

#### [Introduction](#)

[Cultural Resources Statement](#) | [Historic Structure Report](#)

---

<http://www.nps.gov/grko/hrs/hrsi.htm>

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site

## Historic Structure Report

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### CHAPTER I: THE EARLY YEARS, TO 1866

"When I first reached Montana, the Deer Lodge Valley was one of the most beautiful stretches of bunch grass country imaginable. The grass waved like a huge field of grain."

Conrad Kohrs [1]

"We crossed the Deer Lodge River, a wide and fine stream at this point. Nooned at 11 A. M. . . . I saw several hundred cows and calves belonging to [John] Grant, the finest I have seen in America."

James Harkness [2]

#### **A. John Grant Introduces Cattle to the Deer Lodge Valley**

Cattle came to Montana with some of the initial settlers. As early as 1833 Bob Campbell, Bill Sublette's partner, brought three cows and two bulls to a Rocky Mountain Fur Company rendezvous, their eventual destination the Yellowstone River. That same year cattle grazed at Fort Union, at the junction of the Yellowstone and Missouri rivers. An 1850 inventory listed forty-two head of mixed cattle at Fort Benton on the Missouri, and in 1851 another reported twelve head at Fort Alexander on the Yellowstone. [3] Cattle arrived in the Deer Lodge Valley almost as early. In the winter of 1849 to 1850 Captain Richard Grant and his two sons, James and John, returned to the log cabin base camp in the Beaverhead Valley, not far from the Deer Lodge Valley, from which they roamed to trade, driving a herd of cattle acquired on the Mormon Trail between Fort Bridger and Salt Lake. [4] Granville Stuart, who both participated in and chronicled Montana's early history on a grand scale, described the Grants' trading along the Immigrant Trail.

In 1850 Capt. Richard Grant, with his sons John and James Grant began trading along the Emigrant road in Utah for footsore and worn-out cattle and horses. This stock was usually



of good quality and only needed rest and a little care to make them fine animals. The Grants spent the summers along the Emigrant road between Bridger and Salt Lake, and in the fall drove their stock into what is now Montana. [5]

The Grants continued trading and building their herds during the 1850s. Then in 1857 John Grant wintered in the Deer Lodge Valley, presumably taking some cattle with him. [6] He did not stay long, leaving that spring. But in the fall of 1859 he returned to the valley and built a home at the confluence of the Little Blackfoot and Deer Lodge rivers (about twelve miles north of today's Grant-Kohrs Ranch). Grant and his family lived there alone, but maintained friendly relations with the Indians who frequented the valley. Good relations were a necessity in view of the size of Grant's growing herds roaming the richly grassed valley: "two hundred and fifty head of horses and over eight hundred head of cattle." [7] Granville Stuart attested to the quantity and quality of Grant's animals, which he saw when he, too, entered Montana to stay. Stuart described Grant's "several hundred cattle and horses" that had "fattened on the native grasses without shelter other than that afforded by the willows, alders, and tall rye grass along the streams." Stuart, too, brought cattle into Montana in 1858, sixty head, also acquired from the wagon trains on the emigrant trail. [8]

These cattle from the midlands of America, the best that the pioneers on their way to Oregon and California could obtain, formed the foundation of the cattle industry in Montana. There the emaciated stock, weary from the trek across the plains, revived, fleshed out in the grass-rich river valleys of southwestern Montana, and multiplied. These were English breeds, shorthorned animals descended from the cattle that came over from North Europe and England to the Atlantic seaboard colonies. Not until many years had passed and the cattle industry had become a major factor in Montana's economy and culture would the descendants of the Spanish cattle, which had multiplied to form the basis of the Texas cattle boom following the Civil War, come to Montana in any significant numbers. The Montana cattle herds began with English-American shorthorned cattle. The famous Texas Longhorn came later.

Not all of the cattle moving from Missouri and the east along the trail to Oregon failed to make the trip. Many survived, and as these first Montana herds grew, other and larger herds appeared in Oregon, to the west.

Initially cattle may have entered the Oregon country in 1788, coming north to the settlements on Nootka Sound from Monterey, California. These animals were descended from the Spanish types in Mexico, and bore the name "California Longhorns." Then, in the 1790s, Captain George Vancouver shipped some California cattle to the Hawaiian Islands to victual ships calling there. They multiplied well, and by the early 19th century the islands provided cattle to Oregon. Dr. John McLoughlin, chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company post of [Fort Vancouver](#), started a herd of twenty-seven cows and steers there in 1825, later supplementing it with three Durham bulls (Durham is an English shorthorn breed synonymous with "Short Horn"). McLoughlin kept the herd under close and careful control, until by 1838 it numbered a thousand head. As the Durham strain from the three bulls he imported blended with the Spanish strain of the California cattle, Oregon, like Montana, soon had non-longhorns in its early cattle herds, although of course some longhorn qualities would continue to show.

The immigration of 1843 brought "one thousand persons, with 120 wagons, and 5,000 cattle" to the Willamette Valley from Independence, Missouri. The herds were, of course, comprised of the English-American breeds. More Durhams were brought in 1846, and English breeds quickly dominated the Oregon cattle herds. By the 1860s

Oregon was now beginning to profit by the arrival of better cattle from the east. Surpluses adequate to feed the gold seekers stampeding into Idaho, Montana, and Nevada were accumulating, thanks to the abundant bunch grass in eastern Oregon and southwestern Idaho, with fine grama and wheat plants for winter grazing.

During the three decades preceding 1890, the range-cattle industry of the Northwest prospered mightily. . . . The rugged Oregon winters bred strong, rugged animals, far better suited for breeding purposes in their mountain territories, where settlement had to await the end of the Civil War, than Texas Longhorns, which were not inured to protracted cold. [9]

Thus, by the early 1860s the cattle herds in southwestern Montana, especially in the Deer Lodge Valley, and in Oregon, were developing rapidly, with predominantly English-American breeds. The herds to supply meat to the gold rushes of the early 1860s existed before the strikes opened the territory to frenetic settlement by the miners.

But the fast-growing herds could hardly have furnished a foundation for a future cattle empire had the Indians not -- in the main -- left the nascent industry and its bovine assets alone. This potential danger to the herds developing in southwest Montana had been eased earlier by a series of treaties with the Indians in the area negotiated by Washington Territory Governor Isaac I. Stevens in the 1850s. Stevens's treaties also allowed construction of a road from Fort Benton on the Missouri River to Fort Walla Walla in eastern Washington. This route became known as the Mullan Road, and provided an important avenue in and out of the area. [10]

So, a fortuitous combination of rich grass, footsore cattle along the Oregon Trail, and a diminished threat from the Indians allowed the herds to grow.

In 1860, not long after John Grant had moved to the Deer Lodge Valley his herds reached size enough to allow some to be trailed to California for sale. He became the first to export Montana cattle to a distant market. [11]

A year after he settled in the Deer Lodge Valley, Grant "concluded to go to the Immigrant road to induce some families to come with me and settle where I was. I took my horses but my cattle, I left, trusting to Providence. As I was leaving two strangers came up the road and one of them asked 'Do you want to hire a man, perhaps you would like to have a house made of hewed logs.' I said to the fellow, 'All right, what is your name and where



did you come from?' He replied 'My name is Joe Prudhomme and we deserted Fort Benton.' It was a poor recommendation but it was honest. I liked the man's honest appearance, so I hired him and his partner at twenty-five dollars each per month and left them in charge of my cattle and to build a house."

John Grant's mission succeeded well, and he gathered together about a dozen families. They returned with him to settle at the confluence of Cottonwood Creek and the Deer Lodge River, the site of today's town of Deer Lodge. Upon his return Grant discovered he had been most astute in appraising Prudhomme's character.

Joe Prudhomme had built a good hewed log house with a good floor in it. He was not only a good carpenter but a good blacksmith and tinsmith as well. He had sold thirty head of cattle to Capt. Mullen for twenty six hundred dollars. Joe was a very trustworthy man. I never regretted having trusted him. I was well satisfied with my house but remained in it only one year. In 1861 I gave it away and moved to Cottonwood where the other traders had settled. [12]

This move took Grant to the site of the vicinity of Deer Lodge. In 1862 he decided to build a substantial home for his family "in Cottonwood afterwards called Deer Lodge. It cost me a pretty penny." [13] The structure became the ranch house for his operations in the valley, and would become the property of a young Danish-born entrepreneur, Conrad Kohrs, four years later.

[Table of Contents](#)

[Chapter 1 continued](#)

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<http://www.nps.gov/grko/hrs/hrs1.htm>

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site

## Historic Resource Study

### FOOTNOTES

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#### Chapter 1

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1. Conrad Kohrs, "A Veteran's Experience in the Western Cattle Trade," *Breeder's Gazette* 2. "Diary of James Harkness, of the Firm of LaBarge, Harkness, and Company: St. Louis to Fort Benton by the Missouri River and to the Deer Lodge Valley and Return in 1862," *Contributions to the Historical Society of Montana*, 10 vols. (reprinted., Boston, Mass.: J. S. Canner & Co., Inc., 1966), 2:353.
3. Robert H. Fletcher, *Free Grass to Fences: The Montana Range Cattle Story* (New York: University Publishers, Inc., for the Montana Historical Society, 1960), pp. 6-7.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
5. Granville Stuart, *Forty Years on the Frontier As Seen in the Journals and Reminiscences of Granville Stuart: Gold-Miner, Trader, Merchant, Rancher, and Politician*, ed. Paul C. Phillips, 2 vols. in 1 (1925; reprinted., Glendale, Cal.: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1967), p. 97.
6. Johnnie Grant, "Extract from Memoirs of Johnnie Grant," MS Library, Montana Historical Society, Helena, p. 1.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.
8. Stuart, *Forty Years on the Frontier*, 2:97.
9. Charles Wayland Towne and Edward Norris Wentworth, *Cattle and Men* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955), pp. 235-37. Some of the longhorn characteristics showed in cattle that were brought into the Montana ranges in the early 1860s and known locally as "Spanish Cattle."

10. James L. Thane, "Montana Territory: The Formative Years 1862-1870 (Ph.D. diss., University of Iowa, 1972), p. 32.
11. Grant, "Extract from Memoirs," pp. 1-2.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 3. The construction of this house is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2 of this report.
14. Fletcher, *Free Grass*, p. 20.
15. Conrad Kohrs, "Autobiography of Conrad Kohrs," MS, ca. 1913, copy at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, Deer Lodge, Montana, p. 37.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
17. Receipts, 26 Feb. 1863 and 26 June 1863, Conrad Warren Papers, on microfilm at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.
18. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 44.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
22. Kohrs' life during this period is covered in Larry Gill, "From Butcher Boy to Beef King: The Gold Camp Days of Conrad Kohrs," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 8, no. 2 (April 1958):40-55. In somewhat embellished yet useful form.

Conrad Kohrs's lifelong interest in mining was partially summarized in a 1940 article:

In 1866 Mr. Kohrs, with . . . [at least five other investors and] . . . John Bielenberg, organized the Rock Creek Ditch and Mining Company for the purpose of digging the Rock Creek Ditch so that there might be sufficient water available for the [placer] mines. By 1871 they had expended \$168,000 on the ditch and collected from the miners for its use about \$144,000 in the years 1870-71. Later Mr. Kohrs purchased the interest of all his partners but Mr. Bielenberg, and also became interested in Pioneer Gulch where he carried on mining operations from 1873 to 1919, working over a dozen claims. But perhaps his most lucrative mining venture was at Gable, where he is said to have made about

\$100,000, a fortune that enabled him to expand greatly his stock raising activities.

- J. J. McDonald, "Conrad Kohrs, Montana Pioneer," *Americana Illustrated* 34, no. 3 (July 1940):482-93.
23. Interview, Conrad Kohrs Warren with John Albright, 14 May 1975, at Deer Lodge, Montana, p. 2. A copy of his interview is on file at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.
24. Stuart, *Forty Years on the Frontier*, 2:98.
25. Kohrs, "A Veteran's Experience," p. 1329.
26. Conrad Kohrs, "Autobiography," MS. pencil and pen, "dictated at Helena 1885," Conrad Kohrs Collection, Montana Historical Society, hereafter cited as "1885 Autobiography."
27. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 70.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 72.
29. Grant, "Extract from Memoirs," p. 4.
30. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 73. The transaction is recorded in Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 1, Courthouse, Deer Lodge, Montana, p. 161. The purchase of the house included a few pieces of furniture that Grant had picked up, some of which remain today.
31. "Letter From Blackfoot," *Montana Post*, Virginia City, Montana, 16 Dec. 1865, p. 1. The article is reproduced as Appendix 1.
32. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 1, pp. 120-21.

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## Chapter 2

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1. John Clay, "The Passing of Conrad Kohrs," *Breeder's Gazette*, 2 Dec. 1920, p. 1163.
2. Kohrs, "A Veteran's Experience," p. 1329. The "C" on the left shoulder and "K" on the left hip are illustrated in the *Brand Book of the Montana Stock Growers' Association for 1903* (Helena: Independent Publishing Co., 1903), p. 163. Presumably the 1867 brand was similarly placed.
3. Kohrs, "A Veteran's Experience," p. 1329.



4. See Kohrs's "Autobiography," pp. 76-80, for his discussion of the project.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82.
7. "Letter From Blackfoot."
8. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 83.
9. Kohrs, "A Veteran's Experience," p. 1328.
10. J. H. Gehrmann to Montana Historical Society, 19 Nov. 1974, p. 2.
11. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 83.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
14. Gehrmann letter, p. 2.
15. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 86.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
18. *Ibid.*
19. McDonald, "Conrad Kohrs, Montana Pioneer," p. 493.
20. Deer Lodge County Deed Book A, Courthouse, Anaconda, Montana, p. 424. Since there are no metes and bounds given, the exact location of the ranch is not known, and it is not shown on the map outlining the growth of the home ranch. In all probability, however, its location on Tin Cup Joe Creek puts it in the southern portion of the home ranch.
21. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 87.
22. *The New Northwest* (Deer Lodge, Mont.), 8 Oct. 1869.

23. *Ibid.*, 31 Dec. 1869. The very real possibility that this ad represented a landmark in the development of American humor should be considered.
24. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 88-89.
25. *The New Northwest*, 31 Dec. 1869.
26. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 89.
27. 18 Feb. 1870.
28. Kohrs' character and place in the community is examined more thoroughly in Chapter VIII.
29. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 89. The birth was announced in the Friday, 11 Mar. 1870 issue of *The New Northwest*: "Born. To the wife of Conrad Kohrs, on the 2nd, a daughter."
30. *The New Northwest*, 1 Apr. 1870.
31. *Ibid.*, 15 Apr. 1870.
32. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 1, pp. 619-21.
33. 27 May 1870.
34. *Ibid.*, 20 May 1870.
35. *Ibid.*, 24 June 1870.
36. Conrad K. Warren to Mons L. Tiegen, Secretary, Montana Stockgrowers Association, Helena, 8 Feb. 1973, on file at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.
37. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 1, pp. 632-33.
38. *The New Northwest*, 9 Sept. 1870.
39. *Ibid.*, 23 Sept. 1870.
40. *Ibid.*, 30 Sept. 1870.
41. *The Gazette* (Helena, Mont.), 3 Oct. 1870.

42. *The New Northwest*, 7 Oct. 1870.

43. *Ibid.*, 30 Sept. 1870.

44. *Ibid.*, 23 Sept. 1870.

45. *Ibid.*, 9 Dec. 1870.

46. *Ibid.*, 28 Oct. 1870.

47. *Ibid.*

48. Kohrs the community-builder, cattleman, county commissioner, and entrepreneur remained always Kohrs the miner. Mining was important to him for the duration of his life in Montana, and had, indeed, brought him to the Deer Lodge Valley in the first place. The chatty columns of *The New Northwest* in 1870 -- especially the "Local Brevities Section" -- give some indication of the level of his activities in the fall and winter of 1870, and help bring the overall breadth of Conrad Kohrs's mining activities into proper relationship with his other interests: 27 May -- "New and Kohrs leased the Oro Fino mines and ditch -- near Silver Bow -- to John Hays of Cable; the terms were private"; 9 Sept. -- "Catching, Kohrs and Company made \$4,059 on Sept. 8 from their Pike's Peak operations"; 11 Nov. -- "Water was shut off from the Rock Creek Ditch which supplied the Pilgrim Bar gold diggings. . . . Catching, Kohrs and Company water bill for the season: \$15,000. Seasons intake, upper ground, \$45,000, lower grounds \$185,000"; 23 Dec. -- "Kohrs, Bratterton and Hays are building a 500-inch-capacity ditch from the North Fork of Warm Springs Creek to the quartz flats. Estimated cost, \$10,000." Kohrs himself summed up the year as follows: "During this year I pursued my regular business, buying and selling cattle and mining on Cable." "Autobiography," p. 89.

49. *The New Northwest*, 27 Jan. 1871. The party-goer could have served the cause of history a hundred or so years later had he taken the time to describe the outbuildings in more detail, but in the manner of such things he provided only a tantalizing comment on the good quality of the outbuildings at the ranch without enumerating or describing them. The "magnificently furnished" home no doubt reflected Augusta's two years of residence there.

50. *Ibid.*, 10 Feb. 1871. The newspaper inferred that Bielenberg would drive the cattle himself, which he probably did not do. He had to run the home ranch.

51. *Ibid.*, 17 Mar. 1871. Kohrs does not mention sheep in the post-1865 portions of his autobiography. They could not have been a vitally important part of the ranch scene, but they did have a place in the Kohrs and Bielenberg stock raising operations.

52. *Ibid.*, 7 Apr. 1871.



53. *Ibid.*, 14 Apr. 1871.
54. *Ibid.*, 21 Apr. 1871 and 10 June 1871.
55. *Ibid.*, 17 June 1871.
56. *Ibid.*, 16 Sept. 1871.
57. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 1, p. 461, and pp. 282-83, both dated 24 Aug. 1871.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 492, and pp. 486-87, both dated 10 Oct. 1871. These transactions, and all those concerning the creation of the home ranch, appear on Map 9, "Kohrs and Bielenberg -- Home Ranch: Building the Ranch, Land Acquisition, 1866-1908." Because the map shows the areas concerned, an exact transcription of the metes and bounds in each deed does not appear in the text. A listing of land transactions filed under the names of Conrad and Augusta Kohrs and John Bielenberg appears as Appendix 5.
59. *The New Northwest*, 16 Sept. 1871.
60. *Ibid.*, 30 Sept. 1871.
61. *Ibid.*, 14 Oct. 1871.
62. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 92.
63. Attorney, Powell County Transcribed Release of Mortgages, and Power of Book 1, p. 321.
64. 16 Dec. 1871.
65. *Ibid.*, 4 Nov. 1871.
66. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 93. Kohrs wrote his autobiography in 1913.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 95. Notice of the arrival of the herd to Deer Lodge appeared in *The New Northwest* on 11 May: "C. Kohrs & Pemberton & Kelly, are bringing fine blooded stock to Montana."
68. *The New Northwest*, 11 May 1872.
69. *Ibid.*, 18 May 1872.
70. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 2, pp. 286-88. The next entry in the deed book, covering

pages 288-89, transfers all Kohrs's interest in the Rock Creek Ditch Company to Bielenberg for the exact sum (\$9,000) that Bielenberg was paid for the land he just sold Kohrs. Yet Kohrs did not cut his ties with the ditch company after that transaction any more than Bielenberg cut his with the ranch after selling all of the property to Kohrs. The reason for the transfers is not known, but it did not signify any basic change in the relationship between the two, and might have resulted from Kohrs's desire to ease his tax burden.

71. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 95.

72. *Ibid.*, pp. 95-97. The quotation is from p. 95. The number of the herd of Texas cattle -- 3,200 -- also appears in *The New Northwest*, 26 Oct. 1872.

73. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 96-98. The quotation is from p. 96. Kohrs's comment about hard work is interesting. From the day he entered Montana until he was quite aged, Con Kohrs worked hard. Why he chose this time to comment on the difficulties of the cattle business is unclear.

74. *The New Northwest*, 6 July 1872.

75. *Ibid.*, 24 Aug. 1872.

76. *Ibid.*, 14 Dec. 1872.

77. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 2, p. 329.

78. *The New Northwest*, 15 Feb. 1873. His reference to "grade animal" apparently refers to the cross of the registered bulls with the range cows, "grade" usually referring to an animal with one parent registered and the other of inferior breeding.

79. *Ibid.*, 1 Mar. 1873.

80. *Ibid.*, 8 Mar. 1873.

81. *Ibid.*, 22 Mar. 1873.

82. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 99.

83. *The New Northwest*, 17 May 1873. An announcement of Con's appointment was in the 10 May 1873 issue of the paper.

84. *Ibid.*, 5 Apr. 1873.

85. *Ibid.*, 2 Aug. 1873. Kohrs does not mention cattle in his autobiography for the summer of 1873.

86. *Ibid.*, 12 July 1873.

87. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 99-101.

88. *The New Northwest*, 15 Nov. 1873.

89. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 100. The land between the home ranch and town is included in a 5 Apr. 1884 transaction, Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 4, pp. 502-3, suggesting that the purchase from Pemberton and Kelly was not recorded with the county, or if it was, has not yet been located. In his autobiography, Kohrs refers to the ranch as the "Jim Stuart Place" (p. 100). It is probable that this is the same complex known later as the Tom Stuart Place, site of the present visitor contact station and restrooms building.

90. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 101.

91. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

92. *The New Northwest*, 28 Feb. 1874. In 1874 this publication remained one of Montana Territory's major newspapers. Presumably then, their description of the magnitude of the house in relation to all other Montana homes can be considered accurate.

93. *Ibid.*, 14 Mar. 1874.

94. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 102.

95. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 2, p. 452.

96. 2 May 1874. The American Herd Book and the Canadian Herd Book for Short Horns are discussed in Chapter VIII. Appendix 9 is a condensation of the Kohrs and Bielenberg Short Horn Breeding Book.

97. *The New Northwest*, 9 May 1874.

98. *Ibid.*, 23 May 1874.

99. *Ibid.*, 30 May 1874.

100. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 102. The relationship between cattlemen and their brokers is discussed in Gene Gressley, *Bankers and Cattlemen* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971).



101. *The New Northwest*, 20 June 1874, reported 180 head of "choice beef cattle" sold to a Mr. Forbis of Omaha, who had them driven to the railroad and shipped to Omaha. Apparently Forbis was a feeder, and would, after fattening them, ship the cattle to Chicago. Granville Stuart puts the number of cattle at 300 in his *Forty Years on the Frontier*, 2:98. Whatever the exact figure, 1874 marks the first sale of Kohrs beef to Chicago.

102. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 103.

103. *The New Northwest*, 20 June 1874. A copy of the document is on file at the Montana Historical Society, and at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.

104. *Ibid.*, 12 Sept. 1874.

105. *Ibid.*, 10 Oct. 1874.

106. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 104-5. Kohrs might mean the drive of 1875, since he did drive two herds to the railhead that year.

107. *The New Northwest*, 2 Apr. 1875.

108. *Ibid.*, 7 May 1875.

109. *Ibid.*, 28 May 1875.

110. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 104-5.

111. *The New Northwest*, 8 Oct. 1875. Con departed Deer Lodge on October 7 to join the herds already under way to Cheyenne.

112. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 105. The autobiography loses some of its sequential clarity following 1874 and appears to jump to 1876. The narrative here, therefore, is based primarily on reports of cattle sales, purchases, and drives in *The New Northwest*, which reported events as they happened, as opposed to the autobiography, which, while generally quite accurate chronologically, was, after all, composed by Kohrs in 1913, many years after the events he was describing.

113. *The New Northwest*, 26 Nov. 1875.

114. *Ibid.*, 24 Dec. 1875. The article closed with the announcement that Con had travelled to California as well, to "observe mining" there. Whether this is the trip that Kohrs places in his autobiography for 1874, or is indeed a trip he took in 1875 and did not mention in his autobiography, is not clear.

115. *Ibid.*, 21 Jan. 1876.

116. *Ibid.*, 31 Mar. 1876.

117. *Ibid.*, 26 May 1876.

118. *Ibid.*, 18 Aug. 1876.

119. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 105-7. The quotation is from p. 105. The chronological sequence is not clear in this section of the autobiography, as was noted in fn. [108]. This much is clear. *The New Northwest* accounts prove that there were drives to the southeastern Wyoming railhead in both 1875 and 1876. (See the immediately previous footnotes.) The "Centennial at Philadelphia" was undoubtedly the Centennial Exposition held at Philadelphia from May Until November 1876, noted in Luman H. Long, ed., 1968 *Centennial Edition: The World Almanac and Book of Facts* (New York: Newspaper Enterprise Association), p. 174. It is possible that the drive described on pp. 104 and 105 of the autobiography is the 1876 one, leaving the 1875 drive unrecorded.

An equally perplexing question concerns who ran the ranch during the absence of Con Kohrs, John Bielenberg, Mitch Oxarart, and Tom Hooban. The answer is not evident in the autobiography.

120. *The New Northwest*, 26 Jan. 1877.

121. Kohrs calls the area "South Park." Just south of the range near Rawlins, where the cattle had wintered, is the park today called North Park. From Rawlins, the trip to North Park would have been a relatively short one, while the trip to today's South Park would have required the cattle to be driven across North Park, over a mountain range into Middle Park, and then over another range into South Park. It does not make sense for Kohrs to have driven his herd through two rich grasslands to get to a third -- the farthest away from the starting point as well. In addition the autobiography does not mention crossing any mountains, which it probably would have had both high ranges been crossed. The evidence indicates that what Kohrs called South Park is today called North Park, and can be located on current maps by the town of Walden in its center.

122. Kohrs, "Autobiography" pp. 107-8. The first quotation is from p. 107, the second from p. 108.

123. *Ibid.*, p. 108. The ambulance at the park today is the one mentioned in this account, and is probably the vehicle that brought Con and Augusta home from Fort Benton in 1868, and the one used for a variety of other purposes by the family over the active years of the home ranch.

124. *Ibid.*, pp. 111-12. Regent and Strideway are shown in Illustration 3, taken from M. A. Leeson, *History of Montana*, 1885, p. 556. The thoroughbred cattle were Short Horns (also called Durhams).

125. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 3, pp. 359-60.

126. *Ibid.*, pp. 398-99. The date of initial purchase by Con and Augusta is not known. Most of Kohrs's land transactions -- mining, agricultural, and commercial (such as city lots) -- were in both his and Augusta's name. Frequently he and Bielenberg jointly owned land as well.

127. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 113-14. The "Indian scare" was probably a carryover from the Bannock-Paiute War the preceding year, when Con had noted the Indians "were restive" in southern Wyoming.

The eastern and western routes are shown on Map 2, copied from Conrad Kohrs's Papers, with the routes he and C. K. Warren marked on it emphasized. Towne and Wentworth, *Cattle and Men*, p. 244, notes the use of the Powder River Basin as a grazing area for Texas cattle in the late 1870s and early 1880s.

128. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 113-14. John Clay, *My Life on the Range* (New York: Antiquarian Press, Ltd., 1961), p. 8, mentions the visit:

"In the summer of 1879 Conrad Kohrs, then of Deer Lodge, Mont. (of whom more hereafter) spent a few days at Bow Park and bought some stock. Hope [the owner of the stock Con purchased] was immensely struck with his strong personality, and often referred to it. There was a glamour about his talk as he opened up the vein of his past experience." Clay's book, partly memoir, partly history, and partly the report of a participant, is an excellent source for the study of the economics of the cattle business and the approaches to it taken by its various leaders.

129. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 3, pp. 647-48.

130. Kohrs, "Autobiography," Pp. 114-15. Fletcher, *Free Grass*, p. 45, also notes the figure and remarks that it was just such phenomenal growth figures for open range herds in Montana that helped spark the cattle boom of the early 1880s.

131. Black Leg is an infectious disease of young cattle and, less often, of sheep and swine, involving high fever and swelling under the skin. It is usually fatal.

132. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 114-15. In his letter to Teigen, 8 February, Con Warren discusses the 1880 drive and wintering the herd on Goose Creek. He notes that "they summered on the Tongue and shipped for the first time on the Northern Pacific from Miles City in 1881." Therein probably lies the explanation for Kohrs's retention of the herd in north eastern Wyoming. He undoubtedly was awaiting the arrival of a railhead convenient to eastern Montana, and was in a secure enough financial position that he did not have to sell the herd gathered at the Sun River Range in 1880 and could await the imminent arrival of the Northern Pacific.

133. John T. Schlebecker, *Cattle Raising on the Plains, 1900-1961* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), pp. 18-19. Schlebecker's first chapter is a summation of developments in the industry from



the post-Civil War period until 1900, and discusses the historical background of the changes in the industry, the economics of it, and the subsequent changes in marketing of western-grown beef.

134. Mark H. Brown and W. R. Felton, *Before Barbed Wire: L. A. Huffman, Photographer on Horseback* (New York: Bramhall House, 1956), p. 98. This book illustrates the range cattle days -- especially the latter years -- in eastern Montana with a veracity only a man like Huffman, who travelled with the range cattlemen and their herds and photographed them, could do. Other works that are of significant value in presenting in a broad perspective the overall Montana cattle story, and the 1880 period in particular, are Ernest Staples Osgood, *The Day of the Cattleman* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1929), and William C. Everhart, Ray H. Mattison, and Robert M. Utley, *The Cattlemen's Empire*, The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, Theme XV, Westward Expansion and the Extension of the National Boundaries to the Pacific, 1830-1898 (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Dept. of the Interior [NPS], 1959) The chapter on the cattle frontier in Ray Allen Billington, *Westward Expansion*, 4th ed. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1974) also merits consideration.

135. John W. Hakola, "Samuel T. Hauser and the Economic Development of Montana: A Case Study in Nineteenth Century Frontier Capitalism" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1961), p. 226. Hakola's dissertation includes a chapter on the formation and development of the DHS. It is on file at the Montana Historical Society.

136. K. Ross Toole, *Montana: An Uncommon Land* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1959) p. 91. In Kohrs, "A Veteran's Experience," p. 1329, Con remarks that the coming of the railroad "materially expedited" the entry of Texas herds onto the eastern and central Montana plains.

137. Kohrs, "A Veteran's Experience," p. 1329.

138. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 116. The actual mechanics of the case appear to have involved the railroad suing Kohrs, and Kohrs con testing the amount involved. The case is on file with the Clerk of the Court, Deer Lodge County courthouse, and was *not* transcribed for the Powell County Records when the two counties were created from Deer Lodge County. See Cases 1840 and 1841, District Court, Second Judicial District, Deer Lodge County, Montana Territory, *Utah and Northern Railroad Plaintiff Against Conrad Kohrs, et al., Defendant*. Photographic copies are on file at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS. The case began on 21 June 1882 and was not settled until 19 Mar. 1884. The right-of-way was granted, and recorded on 14 Mar. 1884 in Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 4, pp. 495-98 for both the home ranch and upper ranch.

139. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 116.

140. Stuart, *Forty Years on the Frontier*, 2:165.

141. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 117.

142. Clay, *My Life on the Range*, p. 26. Clay was referring to the whole cattle-raising west, not just Montana. "Stags" refers to incompletely castrated bulls, not functional as bulls, but not gaining weight as steers either.

143. Range Cattle Book, Pioneer Cattle Company, Conrad Warren Papers, p. 12. Custer Station was a rail loading point on the Northern Pacific near Billings.

144. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 117-18. All quotations but the final one are from p. 117.

145. *Ibid.*, p. 118. A fire at the home that October caused little damage and is discussed in the Historic Structure Report.

146. *Ibid.*, p. 119. Fletcher, *Free Grass*, p. 48, discusses the transaction but places it in 1882. Kohrs's autobiography is somewhat misleading as to chronology at this point, but a careful examination of the text appears to date the transaction in 1883, probably in the early spring, as soon as the cattle could be moved to a point where the new Owners could assume charge of them.

147. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 119. The deal is also described in Warren to Teigan, Feb. 73, p. 5.

148. Winfield Scott Downs, ed., *Encyclopedia of Northwest Biography* (New York: The American Historical Research Company, Inc., 1941), p. 22. The story of the DHS and Conrad Kohrs's part in its operations over the years following 1883 is a major part of the Kohrs and Bielenberg history. As such, in this narrative it forms part of the story of range cattle activities following 1883.

The 1883 Manager's Report (Folder 24, Box 62, Collection 37, 1883 Annual Manager's Report, Pioneer Cattle Company, Montana Historical Society) for the DHS indicated that Kohrs and Bielenberg had bought into a rapidly developing stock-raising operation: 13,013 "cattle on range," valued at \$35.00 each, totaled \$455,455.00; the 78 "horses at ranch" \$7,385.57; and the "5 wagons and harnesses, 3 ranches, 320 Tons of Hay," and "cash on hand," lesser amounts. The "Approximate Gain" for 1883 stood at \$71,067.95, although it is not clear if this was net profit for the year. The report serves to bring the full magnitude of the DHS operation to a "facts and figures" level, and when the DHS business is combined with the Kohrs and Bielenberg activity, the result represents a major portion of the Montana cattle business for 1883.

149. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 4, pp. 563-65. The land was purchased for \$400 from the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, and probably involved "lieu lands," those areas granted the railroads out of the public domain that did not lie along the right-of-way but were granted in lieu of such land.

150. *The New Northwest*, 10 Aug. 1883.

151. *Ibid.*



152. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 120-23. Kohrs's description of the park as he saw it in 1883 is most interesting reading and provides a seldom seen view of the very early years of Yellowstone.
153. *The New Northwest*, 2 Oct. 1883. Once again *The New Northwest* serves as a source of data on the Kohrs and Bielenberg activities, while simultaneously reminding the reader of an earlier and more literary era of journalism in America.
154. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 122-23. *The New Northwest*, 19 Oct. 1883, numbered the herd at 1,100. Custer Station was in east central Montana, on the Northern Pacific route.
155. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 124.
156. *The New Northwest*, 19 Oct. 1883.
157. *Ibid.*, 9 Nov. 1883.
158. *Ibid.*, 30 Nov. 1883.
159. Brown and Felton, *Before Barbed Wire*, p. 102, quoting Granville Stuart, whose estimates of cattle do not always agree with Kohrs's autobiography. In this case a few thousand makes little difference.
160. *The New Northwest*, 28 Mar. 1884. The work Con Kohrs did in helping create the group that eventually became the Montana Stockgrowers Association is covered in Fletcher, *Free Grass*. Fletcher's study described the development of the association. Kohrs, while a leader in the organization and an important figure in its early formation, did not work alone, but in the mainstream of the movement to organize.
161. *The New Northwest*, 28 Mar. 1884. Kohrs and Bielenberg might, indeed, have been the first to introduce Herefords. But the research effort involved in proving this one way or the other would necessitate time that is not yet available, and the issue has less than a first priority rating among the many research needs of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS. It remains an open question, and a potentially interesting one to pursue.
162. *Ibid.*, 11 Apr. 1884.
163. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 128.
164. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 4, pp. 502-3. The transaction was also mentioned in *The New Northwest*, 11 Apr. 1884, which noted that "the ranch adjoins that of Kohrs and has some excellent meadow land."



165. *Ibid.*, 9 May 1884.

166. *Ibid.*, 22 Aug. 1884.

167. *Ibid.*, 20 June 1884.

168. *Ibid.*, 18 July 1884.

169. *Ibid.*, 1 Aug. 1884.

170. *Ibid.*, 9 Sept. 1884.

171. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 125.

172. *The New Northwest*, 10 and 31 Oct. 1884.

173. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 129.

174. Clay, "The Passing of Conrad Kohrs," p. 1162. In his combination history and reminiscence *My Life on the Range*, p. 119, Clay recalled the same evening but added a significant detail showing the heights to which some rose that night: "Con Kohrs, as I remember, gave a supper at Fausts's one evening. One of our Wyoming bunch became very hilarious and a kind hearted policeman had to eject him and show him the way to his hotel." The 1884 convention, an important part of the range cattle story, is discussed in Clay, *My Life on the Range*, and in Osgood, *Day of the Cattleman*, Chapter VI, "The Cattleman and the Public Domain," pp. 176-215. The chronological sequence of the Kohrs autobiography is somewhat unclear at this point, pages 125-29, where Kohrs discusses the 1884 convention. Since many other sources noted placed Kohrs there in 1884, and the autobiography does not, Kohrs's recollections have yielded in this case to the numerous other sources.

175. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 125. Kohrs's plans to remain at home until early 1885 are noted in *The New Northwest*, 26 Nov. 1884.

176. *The New Northwest*, 23 May and 20 June 1884.

177. *Ibid.*, 31 Oct. 1884.

178. Range Cattle Book, Pioneer Cattle Company, Conrad Warren Papers, p 14. One item, "Estimated Killed by thieves . . . 100," indicates some of the problem of rustling and slaughter of range cattle by people other than the owners.

179. *The New Northwest*, 16 Jan. 1885.

180. Brown and Felton, *Before Barbed Wire*, p. 120.
181. Kohrs, ""Autobiography," p. 125.
182. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 4, p. 585.
183. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 125.
184. *The New Northwest*, 13, 20, and 27 Feb. 1885.
185. *Ibid.*, 6 Mar. 1885.
186. Stuart, *Forty Years on the Frontier*, 2:214.
187. Hakola, "Samuel T. Hauser," p. 244, citing the *Helena Weekly Independent*, 8 Jan. 1885. A later "List of Stockholders, Pioneer Cattle Co." showed "Con Kohrs, J. Bielenberg 3333; A. J. Davis 3333, A. J. Seligman 1743; H. P. Kenneth 363; E. G. Bailey 432; H. J. Davis 433; G. Stuart I." Folder 29. Box 62, Collection 37, Montana Historical Society.
188. Range Cattle Inventory Records, Pioneer Cattle Company, Conrad Warren Papers, p. 16.
189. *The New Northwest*, 20 Feb. 1885.
190. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 125-28.

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## Chapter 3

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1. Toole, *Montana*, p. 5.
2. Billington, *Westward Expansion*, p. 686.
3. Brown and Felton, *Before Barbed Wire*, p. 102.
4. *The New Northwest*, 18 Aug. 1884.
5. Kohrs, "1885 Autobiography," p. 20. (This is the manuscript autobiography on file at the Montana Historical Society and not the eventual 1913 product that has been extensively referred to in the preceding chapters. See [fn. 26](#), Chapt. 1, for the initial citation of this source.)

6. Hakola, "Samuel T. Hauser," p. 247.
7. *The New Northwest*, 19 Feb. 1886. The "Race Track" might be that at the north edge of town, but it probably refers to Race Track Creek, about five miles south of Deer Lodge.
8. *Ibid.*, 15 Jan. 1886.
9. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 129-30.
10. 1886 Annual Manager's Report, 16 Jan. 1886, Pioneer Cattle Company, Folder 29, Box 62, Collection 37, Montana Historical Society.
11. H. P. Kennett to Samuel Hauser, 31 May 1886, in Hakola, "Samuel T. Hauser," citing Collection 37, Montana Historical Society, p. 249.
12. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 130-31. Appendix 7 is a newspaper article dated 10 Sept. 1886 in which Kohrs discusses the leases at some length and infers that leasing Canadian lands had been under consideration for some time.
13. 24 Sept. 1886.
14. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 131. *The New Northwest*, 29 Oct. 1886, carried an item stating that "We regret to learn that our esteemed citizen, Conrad Kohrs, Esq. is not recovering as rapidly as he had hoped and has started on a journey to New York for medical treatment." Possibly the news paper was reporting Kohrs's Davenport trip. The late October date would coincide with fall roundup and loading and shipping followed by Kohrs's travelling to Davenport for medical aid.
15. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 131. Publicly, however, Kohrs remained quite optimistic. See Appendix 7, "Cattle Talk: Points Picked Up in a Casual Conversation With A Well-Informed Grower," *The New Northwest*, 10 Sept. 1886.
16. Range Cattle Inventory Records, Pioneer Cattle Company, Conrad Warren Papers, p. 18.
17. Kohrs "Autobiography," p. 131.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 132-33.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 133.



21. One of the best general descriptions of that winter and its effect on the range cattle industry can be found in Billington, *Westward Expansion*, pp. 686-87. See also Robert S. Fletcher, "That Hard Winter in Montana, 1886-87," *Agricultural History* 4 (1930):123-30. See also Appendix 8 for newspaper accounts of the winter and of the cattle situation, as taken from the pages of *The New Northwest*.
22. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 133.
23. Billington, *Westward Expansion*, p. 676.
24. Toole, *Montana*, p. 146.
25. Stuart, *Forty Years on the Frontier*, 2:237-38.
26. Clay, *My Life on the Range*, pp. 179-80.
27. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 133. This does not tally with the figures given in the manager's report of about 4,500 calves branded. The manager's report might not have represented the entire DHS herd, however. Or possibly the 8,000 figure might have been the total of Kohrs's and Bielenberg's CK herds added to the calf crop of the DHS herds of 1886. While the exact figures are not clear, one thing most certainly is -- the losses suffered by the Pioneer Cattle Company, the Kohrs and Bielenberg partnership, and by most other Montana cattle-growers that winter were horrendous. Brown and Felton, in *Before Barbed Wire*, p. 109, comment: "The Pioneer Cattle Company lost 66 per cent of its cattle; and Stuart left the battle of getting the outfit back onto its feet to Kohrs and others."
28. Range Cattle Inventory Records, Pioneer Cattle Company, Conrad Warren Papers, p. 20. This loss was far above the hopeful and, for conditions, naively optimistic prediction that appeared in *The New Northwest* early in the spring before the total losses were known: "Mr. N. J. Bielenberg estimates the average loss of cattle in Montana at 25 per cent -- mostly of immigrant cattle -- and of sheep a little heavier. His loss of sheep is about eight or nine per cent." 22 Apr 1887. It was Nick Bielenberg who made the estimate to the newspaper, not John, who was apparently a bit more taciturn in his relations with the fourth estate.
29. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 133-34. Fletcher, *Free Grass*, p. 14, mentions the Davis offer as well.
30. Fletcher, *Free Grass*, pp. 86-87, contains a discussion of the less severe nature of the 1886-87 winter in the southwest Montana valleys.
31. Warren interview, p. 5.
32. Towne and Wentworth, *Cattle and Men*, pp. 268-69.

33. 24 June 1887. Stuart, in *Forty Years on the Frontier*, 2:237-38, agreed on the quality of the spring grass: "The spring was very wet, one heavy rain followed another in rapid succession and the grass come on luxuriantly."
34. Stuart, *Forty Years on the Frontier*, 2:237-38. See also Warren to Teigen, 8 Feb. 1973, where Warren notes "Stuart was out as owner-manager," p. 5.
35. *Ibid.*
36. Stuart, *Forty Years on the Frontier*, 2:238.
37. Conrad Warren Papers.
38. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 134-35.

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## Chapter 4

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1. *The New Northwest*, 5 May 1887.
2. *Montana*, pp. 146-47.
3. Fletcher, *Free Grass*, p. 111. Billington, *Westward Expansion*, pp. 685-87, also discusses the changes in the range cattle industry as a whole, though not in Montana specifically Brown and Felton, *Before Barbed Wire*, pp. 151-56, touches on the changes as well. The bulk of the photographs in the work, and the accompanying narrative describe post-1887 open-range cattle operations, chronicling what was slowly ending as it was ending. A contemporary evaluation of the changes then beginning, and the clear statement that the open range was not doomed instantly after 1887, can be found in Fletcher, *Free Grass*, pp. 113-17.
4. Kohrs, "A Veteran's Experience," p. 1329.
5. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 137. Payette, Idaho, and Ontario, Oregon, are northwest of Boise and sit on either side of the Idaho-Oregon line.
6. *Ibid.* Big Sandy is just northeast of Fort Benton, near the bend of the Missouri River. Bowdoin was near the DHS ranges to the southeast.
7. Kohrs, "A Veteran's Experience," p. 1329.

8. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 137.

9. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 9, pp. 408-9. The transaction took place on 18 July 1888. Other business transactions transpired at about this same time. Kohrs devotes a few pages of his autobiography at this juncture, between the end of 1888 and beginning of 1889, to a resume of his mining activities in the period 1884-88. It shows that the mines provided him problems, losses, and then, around 1888, moderate profits. That he could be purchasing stock in mining operations, mining, and selling water from ditches partially or fully owned by him at the same time he was rebuilding the CK and DHS cattle herds is strong enough testimony to the validity of his theory of horizontal business diversification. It might also provide a clue to Kohrs the businessman, who proceeded with vigor in diverse business operations such as mining and cattle raising, not necessarily slowing one down when experiencing hard times in another facet of his enterprises.

10. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 140-42. The quotation above is from page 142.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 143.

12. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 7, p. 163.

13. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 144.

14. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 6, p. 66.

15. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 7, p. 182.

16. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 5, p. 73.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 74. Map 3 shows the growth of the home ranch graphically.

18. 1 May 1891. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 144, indicates that the wedding had originally been scheduled for the last of December. The "smilax" referred to in this case was probably the florist's "smilax," a green twining plant used for decorations but no relation to the evergreen of the genus *Smilax*. The two "smilax" plants are described in *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*, 2d ed.

19. Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 144-45.

20. *Ibid.*

21. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 5, p. 431. (A section is a mile square.)

22. *Ibid.*, p. 432. The cattle business probably did not furnish all the capital for these land purchases.



Throughout the 1890s, Kohrs and Bielenberg continued operating in the mining and real estate businesses.

23. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 145. Again the profit margin was probably provided as much by buying low as by selling high.

24. Item BB K827K #42772, Ledger, 1892-1901, Conrad K. Kohrs, Montana Historical Society, p. 75.

25. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 7, p. 355. The transaction was entered on 11 July 1892.

26. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 145.

27. Kohrs Ledger, 1892-1901, Montana Historical Society, p. 75. While there is no doubt that the taxes represent property of some kind, its exact nature is not known. It could be that the taxes represented assessments of cattle themselves, and if such is the case, it indicates that the size of the herds in Deer Lodge County -- presumably on the home ranch -- far exceeded anything yet imagined. Probably they represent realty taxes, and as such indicate the size of real property holdings in the counties involved, and provide, roughly a gauge to the extent of the cattle business in each of the counties in any given year. Yet this is speculation, and to use the tax data in a concrete and definitive manner, a careful examination would have to be made of the as yet inaccessible assessment records and tax bills in the counties involved. The tax bills, while indicative of business activity level, provide only a rough idea of that level, and that they are cited in the text in this study is not a reflection of any serious or probing investigation. Whether or not these taxes represent Kohrs's and Bielenberg's mining activities as well as their cattle-raising business is also unknown.

28. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 146.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 148-49. John Boardman's increasingly major role in the range cattle management is also noted in McDonald, "Conrad Kohrs, Montana Pioneer," pp 482-83. Kohrs's injury that spring was not serious enough to cancel a planned party. Kohrs wrote that "invitations had been issued for a large party at our house, to be given on the 25th of May. My wife and daughters wished to recall the invitations but I insisted that they go on just the same. It was a happy party. There were eighty present. The sitting room was large enough to accommodate four sets and dancing continued until half past five in the morning, the birds were singing and the sun high above the horizon." Kohrs's injury occurred as he crossed a ditch on an inspection trip of some of his mining properties. "Autobiography", p. 148.

30. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 149.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 145-46.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 149.

33. Kohrs Ledger, 1892-1901, Montana Historical Society, p. 75.
34. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 12, p. 12.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 160-61.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 359. Through an as yet unexplained quirk of the purchase, by some other confusing mechanism, this land, carefully described in the metes and bounds of the deed transfer, was already owned by Kohrs and Bielenberg. Possibly this is a late entry, or a repurchase of land once owned and then sold.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 595-96.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 614-15.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 608-9.
40. Warren to Tiegen, 8 Feb. 1973, pp. 6-7.
41. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 150.
42. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 12, pp. 625-26.
43. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 7, p. 578.
44. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 10, pp. 501-2.
45. *Ibid.*, pp. 510-11.

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## Chapter 5

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1. Warren to Tiegen, 8 Feb. 1973, p. 7.
2. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 5, pp. 524-25.
3. Powell County Transcribed Deed Book 10, p. 591.
4. In the Kohrs and Bielenberg Day Book, Montana Historical Society, p. 25, is the notation dated 8-23-99, "Ranch Land a/c: Larabie Bros. & Co. Paid Register of State Lands: Lease #1102 -- \$30.00: Lease

#1471 -- \$80.00." This book is numbered as Item K827, Acc. #42771 in the collections of the Montana Historical Society. Larabie Bros. & Co. were the Kohrs and Bielenberg bankers in Deer Lodge, so presumably the fact that they paid this from the "ranch land account" meant that the land in question was that of the home ranch. These leases, however, have not been checked.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

6. *Ibid.* The "five-up-and-five-down" and "wineglass" brands, along with many others, such as "CD," represent Kohrs and Bielenberg partnerships with other investors, sometimes for only a limited period or for only a specific herd. The CD was a herd brand for a partnership of Con Kohrs and Marcus Daly, the brand combining the names Con and Daly. The "five-up-and-five-down" and "wineglass" might stand for Kohrs-Bielenberg-Boardman cattle. Sam McKennon was also a frequent partner.

7. *Ibid.*, n. p. It is easy to interpret too much data from the somewhat spartan ledgers and accounts noted above. The phrase "Labor Account" might have had a special meaning to Kohrs that is not immediately apparent today, and the additional costs might reflect overtime or some other unusual pay.

8. *Ibid.*, May 1900. Antoine Menard was, for about thirty years, the handyman at the ranch and lived for part of that time in the old Tom Stuart place, which sat in the field where the visitor contact station is now located.

9. *Ibid.*, December 1900. The additional hand listed this winter was "Ham Sam, Chinaman," as he usually appears on the various ledgers and in the check stubs that remain among the papers at Grant-Kohrs Ranch. He was frequently only paid every other month. Assuming that he remained at the home ranch in December 1900 and performed his regular cooking duties for the bunkhouse crew, but did not appear on the ledger, the total work force at the ranch stood at seven, not including John Bielenberg, plus J. M. Boardman, whose name appears from time to time in the account books. Presumably Boardman, as a manager of the range herd, frequently came to the ranch to confer with John Bielenberg or to pick up horses for the range cowboys and ranches, since by 1900 he would have done any conferring with Con Kohrs at the Helena house.

The small crew retained at the home ranch, as opposed to the large one providing manpower for the roundup, is also mentioned in a letter to the Montana Historical Society by a nephew of Conrad Kohrs, J. H. Gehrmann of Davenport, Iowa, dated 19 Nov. 1974. Mr. Gehrmann visited the ranch in 1904 when he was twelve and again a few years later. (His recollections in the 19 Nov. 1974 letter and in an interview with Historical Architect Peter Snell of the Denver Service Center will be used later in this chapter as well.) Mr. Gehrmann recalled that "A skeleton crew of cowboys was employed during the winter." The 19 Nov. 1974 letter also contains a delightful account of the two cooks, Wilhemenia in the ranch house, and Ham Sam, the Chinaman, in the bunkhouse:

Augusta had brought back from Germany a distant relative, Wilhemenia, who was an excellent cook, but brooked no interference in her kitchen. Especially the presence of



small boys. So my brother and I when we were hungry went to the ranch hands kitchen which was under the control of a Cantonese Chinaman who had been named Sam, because his own name was unpronounceable. Sam always had a pie for us. If the ranch hands were around we knew the pie was in the flour barrel in the store room, because a loose pie was always disappearing when the ranch hands were around. Sam's favorite pie was "Fly Pie" (Raisin Pie) . Sam had a very good friend who had a vegetable garden in Deer Lodge. Once a week the vegetable man walked from Deer Lodge to the ranch with a yoke over his shoulders and two baskets of vegetables suspended on the ends of the yoke. He had one other ranch between Deer Lodge and the Kohrs Ranch, but he adored Ohma Kohrs and the walk was nothing. She had learned a little Chinese and could count up to one hundred in Chinese. After he had delivered her vegetables, he and Sam convened in Sam's kitchen to shave each other heads down to the pigtails.

10. Beginning in 1901 the Powell County Deed Books are no longer transcribed from the original Deer Lodge County Deed Books. All the following Powell County citations, therefore, are not Transcribed Powell County Deed Books, but simply Powell County Deed Books The three purchases involved are recorded in Powell County Deed Book 1, pp. 135, 136, and 137.

11. H. P. White, "The Building of a Cattle Empire," *Western Livestock and the Westerner* (August 1949), p. 55.

12. White, *ibid.*, writes: "They say we live for our children after we're forty and Con Kohrs' years were much beyond that in 1901. Bill's death seemed to sweep from Montana's Mr. Cattleman much of the purpose of life." Unfortunately White provides no citation to his statement, and it would have been strange for as strong and resolute a character as Conrad Kohrs to give up his purpose in life regardless of the loss he and Augusta and John had suffered. The task of assessing the impact of William's death remains to be accomplished, and probably should not even be attempted by anyone except a biographer immersed in the Kohrs autobiography and available supporting historical data. A key point is that nothing unusual happened until 1906 when corporations began to be formed to manage the Kohrs and Bielenberg interests.

13. Powell County Deed Book 1, p. 385.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 430, 431.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 445.

16. Powell County Deed Book 2, p. 63.

17. Powell County Deed Book 5, pp. 161-62.

18. Fletcher, *Free Grass*, p. 95. Fletcher's Chapter 10, "The Rawhide Era," pp. 94-100, describes the

roundup in Montana in Fletcher's exclusive style, blending the facts with the phrases and attitudes peculiar to the Montana range cattle business. Fletcher's account does not mention that one outfit took responsibility for the pool, hired the hands necessary for the overall effort, and fed those who worked a certain area. That organization was then reimbursed by the other outfits and payments from other ranchers frequently appear in the Kohrs and Bielenberg account books. One of the most common is the "Malta Pool." Another excellent description of the 1904 general roundup, this one involving CK cattle and richly illustrated, is the account in Brown and Felton, *Before Barbed Wire*, pp. 202-9. William H. Forbis, *The Cowboys* (New York: Time-Life Books, Inc., 1973) describes the roundup in his Chapter 4, "Roundup Time." This work, as good as some others in the *Time-Life* series "The Old West" have been bad, describes in narrative detail and in drawings the machinations of the roundup crew and how they went about their work.

19. This is a somewhat speculative statement. But based on the description that J.H. Gehrmann provides in his 19 Nov. 1974 letter and on the narrative in Brown and Felton *Before Barbed Wire*, pp. 202-9, it would seem that the same roundup is being described, and that it occurred near the old N-N ranch acquired by Kohrs and Bielenberg in 1899.

20. J. H. Gehrmann to Montana Historical Society, 19 Nov. 1974. The Gehrmann boys were the sons of the daughter of Henry Kohrs, Con's older brother; thus Con Kohrs was the boy's granduncle, Augusta a grandaunt, and John Bielenberg, being Con's half brother, was their grand half uncle, not their half grand-uncle.

21. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 153.

22. Powell County Miscellaneous Records Book 1, p. 421.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 469. The transcripts are dated 2 Feb. 1907.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 597-99. The relationship of the Rock Creek Ditch and Mining Company to the Pioneer Mining Company is not clear since they both involved mining properties.

25. Powell County Deed Book 9, pp. 457-76. There were probably other lands involved in Forest Service leases, although they do not appear in the Powell County Records. Since the figure of 26,787 acres is a conservative one, the addition of only 3,000 acres would put the home ranch up to 30,000 acres, which the family and Deer Lodge tradition hold as being its greatest size. The final purchases of land for the home ranch prior to its consolidation under the Kohrs and Bielenberg Land and Livestock Company in 1908 had come the year before, when 120 acres of land along Mullan Creek, west and north of the ranch house, were bought. *Ibid.*, p. 48. Among the final purchases by the Kohrs and Bielenberg Land and Livestock Company was the southeast quarter of the south east quarter of Section 24, Township 8 North, Range 9 West, comprising 40 acres, recorded in Powell County Deed Book 13, p. 191.



26. The destruction of some of the structures, the partial destruction of at least one other, and the removal, intact, of at least one building posed difficult choices concerning nomenclature. One solution, and the one adopted by the authors of this study, designates those structures that no longer exist as "Non-Extant" and all others as "Historic Structures," per National Park Service practice. This brought its own difficulties concerning two structures, however. Both Historic Structures 17 and 12 are on sites where they were relocated in 1907. They were removed to make way for the Milwaukee Road right-of-way about that time. When referring to them in their original site, they carry a "Non-Extant" title, followed, in parenthesis, by their "Historic Structure" number. The other seven "Non-Extant" structures were destroyed and thus carry only "Non-Extant" labels.

27. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 153.

28. The data is, no doubt, available in various locations, and might well be assembled later. The microfilming of the Kohrs-Bielenberg-Warren Papers, completed in the fall of 1975, has provided one collection that could be surveyed. The Powell, Dawson, McCone, Phillips, Valley, and Roosevelt County land records might also be surveyed to determine the exact sequence of the dissolution of the land and cattle empire. Such an extensive survey was not possible with the time and funds available for this study. Additional research needs are mentioned in the Recommendations and Suggestions for Additional Research section of this report. It is generally accepted that all the DHS and N-N remnants were gone by the mid-1920s.

29. Gehrman, in a letter dated 19 Nov. 1974, p. 3, notes: "During the war food was scarce and a wheat combine purchased all but the home ranch." Howard Mayo, in a conversation with John Albright at the Grant-Kohrs Ranch, 3 Mar. 1975, mentioned that there was wheat on the upper ranch. As a young man, Mayo had worked summers there.

30. Powell County Deed Book 22, p. 209. This act was executed on 29 Dec. 1915 but was not entered in the Deed Book until 18 Oct. 1923, after Con and John had both died.

31. Powell County Deed Book 18, p. 556. See also Powell County Deed Book 17, p. 101.

32. The 2 June 1919 offers to sell to Williams and Pauly, including a description of the lands involved, are in Powell County Miscellaneous Records Book 4, pp. 141-48.

33. The survivors, Augusta and her daughters, Mrs. Katherine Warren and Mrs. Anna Boardman, sold two pieces of land, one of 720 acres, another of 400, to Williams and Pauly, Powell County Deed Book 21, pp. 428-29.

34. Powell County Miscellaneous Records Book 5, pp. 268-75. The three major land transactions, two on 2 July 1919 and one on 18 Sept. 1924, were the most important ones executed in the dissolution of the ranch. Other small additions and deletions took place from 1916 to 1927. They are reflected in the following Powell County Deed Books: 21, pp. 367-68; 19, pp. 579-80; 20, p. 83; 19, p. 578; 19, pp. 580-



81; 21, pp. 357-58; 21, pp. 355- 56; 19, 577-78; 24, p. 214; 24, pp. 141-47; 23, pp. 542-43; 24, p. 255.

35. Warren Interview, May 1975, pp. 19-20. The "Helena Herd" was registered but carried no papers, because the herdsman in charge of them prior to their acquisition by Kohrs and Bielenberg had burned their papers in a dispute with the owner.

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 25.

37. Powell County Deed Book 25, p. 439. Other pertinent entries regarding the transfer in the same Deed Book are on pp. 423-27.

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## Chapter 6

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1. Charles Morrow Wilson, "6000 Acres and a Microscope," *Scribner's Magazine* (September 1937), p. 47. Wilson's effervescent prose and numerous illustrations describe a visit he made to the ranch in 1937. and the resulting article proved to be invaluable to this study. The comparison of the old techniques in ranching, as adhered to by Con Kohrs and John Bielenberg, with those of Con Warren in the years following 1930 was greatly facilitated by Wilson's article. It is featured in Chapter VII in the section dealing with older versus more modern techniques of ranching at Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. Herb Jilson, "My Ranch Situated on Cottonwood Creek," *Western Livestock Reporter, Ranch Feature Issue* (6 Oct. 1948), pp. 52-53 also contains a great deal of material on Con Warren s management of the ranch from 1932 to 1948. Warren's increased irrigation projects at the ranch and the creation of the registered Hereford herd are featured in the article.

2. The upper ranch, close to 6,100 acres in 1932, had been sold, but within a few years would be repossessed by the Conrad Kohrs Company. In 1930 the company still owned all of the upper ranch, but sold it not long afterward (see Powell County Deed Book 25, pp. 523-24). The ranch that Con Warren took over in 1932 was the old home ranch around the ranch house and buildings complex. Only later in the mid-1930s did he pick up control of the upper ranch, after the CK Company had repossessed it.

3. Warren Interview, 12 May 1975, pp. 26-27.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

6. Wilson, "6000 Acres," p. 45.

7. Warren Interview, 12 May 1975, pp. 29-30.

8. Wilson "6000 Acres," p. 45.
9. Edwin C. Bearss, "Resource Description and Evaluation," Grant-Kohrs Ranch, dated 11 Feb. 1971, p. 16. Bearss's study is based, in part, on his conversations with Conrad K. Warren as he gathered the resource data. His work for the Warren period supplements the 12 May 1975 interview with Mr. Warren conducted by John Albright.
10. This data was taken down during a May 1975 conversation involving Mr. Warren and numerous others at GRKO offices in Deer Lodge, and was put onto the draft historical base map nearby. It is otherwise undated. Using the map. Mr. Warren placed the buildings at their former locations and gave the approximate date that he removed them. The structures involved are Non-Extant Structures H, I, J, and K.
11. Bearss, "Resource Description," pp. 15-18.
12. Jilson, "My Ranch Situated on Cottonwood Creek," p. 7.
13. Unless otherwise stated, the material under this subheading is taken from Wilson, "6,000 Acres," pp. 42-47, 69.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
18. Interview, C. K. Warren with John Albright, 21 Feb. 1975, in which the Guernseys were noted. A later interview, 12 May 1975, mentioned the Durhams.
19. Warren Interview, 12 May 1975, p. 36
20. Wilson, "6,000 Acres," p. 46.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 47. The "narrow board-built cell" is a squeeze chute, such as Historic Structures 47 and 53. The CK brand, of course, still belonged to the Conrad Kohrs Company, amid since the ranch was still owned by them, it was entirely appropriate that the CK brand remain.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

23. *Ibid.* , p. 47. See also Warren Interview, 12 May 1975, pp. 27, 49-50.
24. Interview, C. K. Warren with John Albright, 2 Oct. 1976, at Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS.
25. Powell County Deed Book 27, p. 385.
26. Warren Interview, 2 Oct. 1976, at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.
27. Warren Interview, 12 May 1975, p 35. Warren had split profits from the horses with the Conrad Kohrs Company.
28. Jilson, "My Ranch Situated on Cottonwood Creek," p. 7.
29. Warren Interview, 12 May 1975, pp. 36-37.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.
31. A sale in which various breeders would consign two or more specific bulls, help pay for publishing a catalog, and then deliver the bulls to the event.
32. Warren Interview, 12 May 1975, p. 46.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

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## Chapter 7

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1. Warren Interview, 12 May 1975, p. 20.
2. Interview, J. H. Gehrmann with Peter Snell, at Davenport, Iowa, 7 July 1975, p. 2.
3. The myriad publications on the cattle industry in America might be consulted for definitive proof -- if it exists -- of who first introduced purebred cattle to Montana Territory and when. In the interests of time available for the conduct and completion of this study, the issue has not been examined to any great lengths. It is quite correct to state that Conrad Kohrs was among the early cattlemen to introduce purebred stock to Montana. It is not yet known if he was the *very* first.
4. H. P. Kenneth to S. H. Hauser, 29 Jan. 1887. See Appendix 11.
5. The advertisement is quoted in full at the beginning of Chapter IV.



6. Warren Interview, 12 May 1975, pp. 9-10. "Leeds-Lion" was a Shire at the ranch shortly after the turn of the century.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

8. The process of change from the open range days to the current methods of raising cattle is described in numerous references. One of the best current works on the subject is Schlebecker, *Cattle Raising on the Plains*, cited in full earlier. Brown and Felton, *Before Barbed Wire*, discusses Montana's transition from the old to the new in detail. Fletcher, *Free Grass*, p. 129, explains that transition also. He wrote that the new breed of

granger-cowmen were using controlled water on their land, too. The current belief [about 1900] among practical students of the livestock industry was the open-range practice was well on its way to extinction. It would have been a deaf cowman of the old school who had not heard the repeated predictions and warning. They didn't have to be told that the small rancher was in the ascendancy. He had more than a foot in the stirrup -- he was firmly in the saddle. His irrigated forage crops of redtop, timothy, clover and bluegrass replaced native grass.

In the western valleys, ranchers had diverted mountain streams to flood hay meadows before extensive irrigation was practiced east of the mountains. Montana's first alfalfa field was planted in the Madison Valley about 1880.

9. Wilson, "6,000 Acres," p. 47.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

11. Kohrs, "A Veteran's Experience," p. 1401.

12. The letter is shown in full as Appendix 10. Kohrs's grammar and spelling improved markedly in future years. But in the letter from which this quotation is taken, he reveals a quality of style and colorful phrasing that appears later in his article in the *Breeder's Gazette* and in his autobiography.

13. Discussed in more detail in Chapter I.

14. J. H. Gehrmann letter, 19 Nov. 1974, p. 1.

15. *The New Northwest*, 22 July 1887.

16. J. H. Gehrmann letter, 19 Nov. 1974, p. 3.

17. *The New Northwest*, 6 Mar. 1885.
18. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 150.
19. *The New Northwest*, 24 Aug. 1883.
20. *Ibid.*, 5 Sept. 1884.
21. Warren Interview, 14 May 1975, p. 8.
22. Warren Interview, 12 May 1975, P. 8.
23. "Otey Yancey Warren, M.D.," in *A History of Montana*, vol. 3, *Family and Personal History* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1957), p. 379.
24. *Colonial and Revolutionary Lineages of America: A Collection of Genealogical Studies Completely Documented And Appropriately Illustrated, Bearing Upon Notable Early American Lines and Their Collateral Connections* (New York: The American Historical Company, 1957), p. 135. See also Fletcher, *Free Grass*, p. 235.
25. *The New Northwest*, 22 Sept. 1885.
26. See Appendix 1, and Kohrs, "Autobiography," pp. 80-81, describing an 1867 party, and p. 90, describing one in 1871.
27. Conversation Peter Smell and Con Warren, 11 Sept. 1975, p. 3, copy on file at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.
28. Interview, Howard Mayo with John Albright, 3 Mar. 1975, notes on file at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.
29. Warren conversation, 11 Sept. 1975, p. 4.
30. Gehrman Interview, 7 July 1975, p. 2.
31. Warren conversation, 11 Sept. 1975, p. 6. The dates for this fall within the 1912-20 period, since Warren was born in 1907. However, it is likely that the morning and afternoon coffee at that time carried over from the days before the Kohrs moved to Helena.
32. Gehrman Interview, 7 July 1975, p. 2.
33. Interview, Mrs. Charles Poe with Peter Spell, 9 Sept. 1975, p. 2.

34. Gehrmann Interview, 7 July 1975, p. 2.

35. Interview, T. G. Mooney with Ralph W. Cummings, WPA Montana Writers File, Montana State College, 11 June 1940, p. 1.

36. 2 Dec. 1920.

37. Clay, "The Passing of Conrad Kohrs," p. 1163. All of Clays words noted in the two paragraphs above came from this page.

38. Mooney Interview, p. 1.

39. Brown and Felton, *Before Barbed Wire*, pp. 103-4.

40. Some of the works already cited can be utilized to place Kohrs's introduction of blooded stock into Montana into perspective with cattle dealings in the rest of the country. Of these, Towne and Wentworth, *Cattle and Men*, should be among the first consulted. Other good sources include Allan Brogue, "The Progress of the Cattle Industry in Ontario During the Eighteen Eighties," *Agricultural History* 21, No. 3 (July 1947):163-69; Donald R. Ornduff, *The Hereford In America: A History of the Breed's Progress* (Kansas City, Mo.: Hereford History Press, 1957); J. Orin Oliphant, "The Cattle Herds and Ranches of the Oregon Country, 1860-1890," *Agricultural History* 21, No. 4 (October 1947) :217-38; George F. Lemmer, "The Spread of Improved Cattle Through the Eastern United States to 1850," *Agricultural History* 21, No. 2 (April 1947): 179-92; C. S. Kingston, "Introduction of Cattle Into the Pacific Northwest," *Washington Historical Quarterly* 14 (1923) : 163-85; and John Clay, *My Life on the Range*.

41. Both Conrad Kohrs and Granville Stuart share a rather unusual distinction -- they are two cattlemen whose names were given to ships. The Liberty Ship S.S. *Conrad Kohrs* was completed on 30 June 1943 at Richmond, California, and was leased by its owners, the United States Maritime Commission, to the South Atlantic Lines. Following wartime service, it was returned to the government on 30 Apr. 1946. For the next eight months it was moored with the Hudson River Reserve Fleet; it was then sold to the Italian government on 7 Jan. 1947 and renamed the *Aequipas*. Leased by the Italian government not long afterward. to S. A. Industria, it received the name *Acquis II*. It served for many years under that name before being broken up for scrap in 1964. Details on the ship named for Stuart are not known.

42. Warren Interview, 12 May 1975, p. 1.

43. Warren conversation, 1 Sept. 1975, p. 9.

44. Interview, Conrad K. Warren with John Albright, 6 May 1975, copy on file at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS. It is wise to remember that Bielenberg predated John Wayne by a considerable number of years.



45. The letter is dated 4 May 1881. See Appendix 10.
46. Interview, Conrad K. Warren with Peter Smell, 9 June 1975, p. 4.
47. Conversation with Conrad K. Warren, 6 May 1975. Copy on file at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.
48. Warren Interview, 12 May 1975, p. 8.
49. Patricia W. Tarnawsky to Mrs. Paul Brazier, Helena, Montana, 25 Mar. 1969, Montana Historical Society.
50. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 85. See Illustrations 9, 10, and 11 for the photographs discussed.
51. *The New Northwest* notes her community activities, for example, in January 1870, and on 20 Dec. 1873, and 14 Nov. 1874.
52. Clay, "The Passing of Conrad Kohrs," p. 1163. Mrs. Kohrs's tastes in decorating and what the style she chose represented is discussed in greater detail in Appendix 17. Was Clay, the sophisticated Englishman, damning with faint praise? Instead of "stylish," "refined," and "elegant," he chose "solid," "substantial," and "in good taste." The chances are that Clay, while not offended by Augusta's decorative scheme, was not exactly enchanted with it.
53. Kohrs, "Autobiography," p. 131. The brother in this case was Charles Bielenberg.
54. 19 Nov. 1974, p. 2.
55. Interview, Mrs. J. Maurice Dietrich with John Albright and Paul Gordon, 6 May 1975, p. 1.
56. Interview, Conrad K. Warren with John Albright and Grant-Kohrs Ranch Park Staff, 5 May 1975, p. 2.
57. "Ohma's" name is much a part of family tradition. One source is the Tarnawsky letter, 25 Mar. 1969, which notes: "Anyway, Ohma was really Augusta Kohrs, wife of Conrad Kohrs. . . . My father [Con Warren] always called 'Ohma' that because it is German for grandmother. . . . "So we kids called her 'Ohma' too."
58. Dietrich Interview, 6 May 1975, p. 3.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

60. Warren Interview, 6 May 1975, pp. 4-5.

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